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Volume 11.4 May 2017

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* The text of this issue is from Pentagram magazine articles published by the Lectorium Rosicrucianum.

LECTORIUM ROSICRUCIANUM

here exists a golden thread, which leads out of the labyrinth of our broken reality and towards the Truth. The Lectorium Rosicrucianum, or International School of the Golden Rosycross, aims to help seekers find and form a living connection with this shining filament, which is woven of love, wisdom, knowledge (gnosis) and action.



Most importantly, this golden thread is a Path that can actually be walked, a Path shown by all religions in their original form. No Master or Initiate can give the Truth to another. It can only be approached by our own efforts, and by persevering throughout all the obstructions and difficulties we encounter on the way. And it can only be reached through an inner process of transformation called 'soul-rebirth', or 'transfiguration'. A bonafide School points out the Path of transfiguration and teaches its pupils how to follow it.

It is not the I-central self, or personality, that profits from the process of transfiguration as meant here, but the inner, divine Self, which is awakened and enabled to become increasingly active. This has tremendous results for the personality: he or she becomes an instrument, a servant, of another Order, the Divine Order, the 'kingdom not of this world', and in that state is able to stand right in the midst of the world in the service of every human being.

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum is a modern organization in the sense that its message is adapted to the strongly individualized consciousness of twenty-first century humanity. However, it has deep roots in the past, for it is part of the long and ancient tradition of Mystery Schools, and is a development of earlier impulses of spiritual awakening such as those of the gnostics, Cathars and classical Rosicrucians of the 17th century.

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PUBLIC ACTIVITIES

IRELAND

May 15 - 8:15 pm

From the Essenes to the Rosycross

Harbour Hotel, Gleggan Room Galway, Ireland info@goldenrosycross.ie

May 16 - 8:15 pm

From the Essenes to the Rosycross

Maldron Hotel Smithfield Smithfield Square Dublin, Ireland info@goldenrosycross.ie

May 17 - 8:15 pm

From the Essenes to the Rosycross

Jury's Inn Hotel Anderson's Quay Cork, Ireland info@goldenrosycross.ie

United Kingdom

May 27 - 2:30 pm

Escaping the Prison of Our Mind

Senate House Malet Street London WC1E 7HU Tel: 44 1328 701217

AUSTRALIA

May 14 - 3:45 pm

Contemplative Meeting

Dandenong Ranges
Mount Dandenong VIC 378
Tel: 04 039 4997 | info@goldenrosycross.org.au

May 22 - 4:30 pm

Contemplative Meeting

Pacific Hwy & McLean St Coffs Harbour NSW 2450P Tel: 02 6645 4723 | info@goldenrosycross.org.au

May 28 - 2:00 pm

Contemplative Meeting

5 High St Wirrabara SA 5481 Tel: 04 0909 1484 | info@goldenrosycross.org.au

United States

May 21 - 2:30 pm

Q&A with the Rosicrucians

New York Open Center
22 E 30th St
New York, NY 10016
Tel: 212-561-7358 | newyork@goldenrosycross.org



FROM EAST TO WEST

Seen from the earth, the sun travels from east to west. We say that it rises in the east and sets in the west, in seemingly endless repetition. The visible sun makes life on earth possible. Yet there is also an invisible sun, which controls and nourishes invisible processes.

The visible sun is an expression of the invisible spiritual sun, called Aten by the Egyptians, Hephaestus by the Greeks and Vulcan by the Romans. However, the visible sun is more than a material counterpart of the invisible sun. It transmits the forces released by the invisible, spiritual sun for the benefit of the solar system. As such it is a call resounding from the east.

East and west are geographical indications related to the rotation of the earth. Should the position of the poles change, then east and west would also change place, as described in ancient Egyptian temple archives. In Old Indian, Greek and Latin the concepts of respectively usas, eos and aurora were used. They mean 'dawn' as well as 'goddess of the dawn' and 'golden shine'. The word 'west' is derived from the Old Indian avas, the Greek bespera and the Latin vesper. They mean as much as descending (also into matter), declining, evening (star) and evening land. And also, the place where the sun disappears and darkness begins.

As the universal teachings explain, the planned development of humanity has now entered the Aryan era. This era is named after the Old Indian word *arya*, meaning noble. The cradle of the Aryan races lies in Central Asia. From there the seven spiritual impulses of the seven world religions have emanated. These seven world religions and the cultures arising from them, have left astral, etheric and physical traces from east to west. In this way the darkness gradually was and is illuminated.

Many of these traces are invisible. The visible traces can be found in temples, words, symbols and images testifying of the origin of humanity and its return to that origin. In the Gospel of John (1:1-3) we can read: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.' It seems that the power of this magical Bible word has got lost. At any rate, it no longer appeals to the materially-minded human being. For him it has largely deteriorated into a perfectly ordinary word that can be used at any occasion to substantiate one's own opinion. Thus it appears to have lost its power. Or so it seems. But reality is different. Because without the Word of which the Gospel of John testifies, not anything was made that was made. That Word is the power behind growth and fulfilment, the The god Dionysus is born from the thigh of Zeus and is caught by Hermes. Basrelief, Vatican Museum, Rome.

power perfecting creation, irresistibly and systematically. Coincidence and arbitrariness are excluded in this process.

LIVING KNOWLEDGE OF ORIGINAL LIFE

The Book of the Golden Precepts, the source of which is unknown and from which H P Blavatsky derived The Voice of the Silence, mentions the Gnyana of Gnyan, meaning pure knowledge or wisdom. 'Woe to the deer that is o'ertaken by the barking fiends before he reach the Vale of Refuge, Gnyan Marga, "path of pure knowledge" named'. Here, Gnyan is literally translated as 'path of pure knowledge'. And a Sanskrit textbook about the living knowledge Gnyaneshwari describes the moment at which Krishna imparts his brilliant philosophical treatise to Arjuna.

The Greeks called the living knowledge of original life Gnosis. When the Christian concept of 'God' started to loose its meaning, the Greek word 'Gnosis' was again 'un-covered' and gained significance. After the Renaissance the time was ripe to study the backgrounds of Gnostic life in depth and to put them into practice. After long periods of 'suppression' and a relatively short period of preparation by pioneers like Madame Blavatsky, Max Heindel, Rudolf Steiner and many others, the veils were lifted from the Gnosis. This new development was also envisaged in the next phase of the development plan for humanity.

From crevices and deserts of obscurity the unadulterated teachings emerged. Discoveries like those at Nag Hammadi in Egypt brought the Gnosis into the news. In spite of initial opposition from conservative quarters, the manuscripts of Nag Hammadi could be translated and made available to the public at large. The profound wisdom of the ancient Gnostics was placed before the modern human being and gradually gained recognition.

In the meantime many have embraced the Gnosis as a source of unknown inspiration, as a voice from another world, and Gnosis has become an object of profound study especially in esoteric circles. But 'Herod', always present as a major adversary, is keeping a finger on the pulse. He enjoys placing the Gnosis in a bad



light, while recognising its traces as an historical phenomenon of minor importance. This of course does not keep the Gnosis from guiding humanity with immeasurable love and patience in its development and to steer its ascent in the right direction. The child must grow, become strong and do away with its swaddling-clothes of time and delusion.

It is very important for the modern human being to continuously 'inhale', with head and heart, that living, purifying and regenerating power of God, the Gnosis, so that it can fulfil him and raise him above his wrong track. For that is the condition for growth. Only with heart and head enlightened in this way, a human being can be a servant of the Gnosis. The Gnostic path of development has a wealth of witnesses. Complete civilisations have followed this path and in the more recent past that thread has been picked up again by the Bogomils, Cathars, Freemasons and Rosicrucians.

SEARCHING ON ALL LEVELS OF LIFE

In our present turbulent times, many become conscious of unknown, often higher inner motives. They form groups of seekers on all kinds of levels. As in the past, some unite in brotherhoods with high ideals. On the basis of the potential faculties of their new soul they can build a unity in which they can cross the border between form and content and become of service to their fellow human beings. Then the light power received and released by them can be used to alleviate the needs of their fellow creatures.

Should they succeed in forming a Grail, or as the Bible calls it, a sea of glass, this would show that they had con-



quered lower life. Then such a community of newly ensouled human beings reaches the level on which the Gnosis can reveal itself to them for the benefit of humanity, which is searching for liberation.

Gnosis is omnipresent and penetrates every human being

The time seems to be ripe for this. In daily life ripeness indicates the moment of the harvest. This is also the case in a spiritual sense. The Gnosis speaks for itself. That power is omnipresent and encompasses and penetrates every human being. Everyone searching for this power must be able to recognise it in those who propagate it. Yet, it can only be made recognisable by those who receive it consciously and who

The sun god
Shamash warms a
Babylonian
monarch. Relief in
Susa,
Mesopotamia,
12th-19th century
BC. Louvre, Paris.



consciously release it and pass it on for the benefit of all of life. That is what needs to be done, if humanity is to profit from it.

After the periods of working *for* humanity and *with* humanity, the time has now come that the Gnosis can work *through* humanity, provided that the latter is willing. Gnosticism may still be a heretical movement, especially to the conservative and authoritarian human being, to others it brings a refreshing outlook on creation and one's own life with many new possibilities, and particularly with a new, liberating purpose of life.

It becomes apparent that Gnosis is not bound to time. Rather, it is beyond time and space. It is the living truth from the beginning of creation. The Word of the beginning without which not anything was made that was made.

Humanity has reached the end of a development. That means that a new phase is standing at the door and in fact has already started. The dawn of this new development has already announced itself. And it is up to present-day human beings to testify in deed and truth of the Word, the Gnosis. In the Bible we can read that Jesus Christ has come into the flesh. That means that the living knowledge and the

truth descend into the human being to manifest themselves in and through him.

The Gnostic transfigurist Jan van Rijckenborgh writes in his book The Universal Gnosis, that the concept of Gnosis refers to knowledge. Generally speaking this means hidden knowledge or mysterious knowledge. However, the Gnosis in its original sense, is the sum total of all primordial knowledge, the combination of all knowledge which directly refers to the original, divine life of a truly divinehuman life wave. This Gnosis was never written down. That was not possible. It was only passed on orally. And only that was passed on, which at any moment was deemed useful and necessary. It is impossible for the Gnosis to be revealed and presented in its entirety, as a system.

The Grail is a beacon in the night of the times

All universal books of wisdom of the ancients – also the collection we know as the Bible – do not necessarily constitute revealed Gnosis, although these special writings indeed testify of the Gnosis. They tell of the original inviolable unity, of the incident of the separation between

Hephaestus forges a shield. Museo nuovo del Palazzo Conservatori, Rome the divine and the undivine. Usually this takes the form of a dialogue between a teacher and his pupil in search of that original unity. Hence there are many legends and tales in which that origin and the road leading to it, are portrayed. In some of them the Grail has been chosen as the ultimate symbol of these processes. The Grail goes from east to west, from light to darkness and is, as such, a beacon in the night of the times.

This Christian culture was the period of the harvest, the testimony of those who had found the way of the Grail and who put its requirements into practice. That path has amongst other things been recorded in the books of the four evangelists. But they were not the only ones who testified of this path. Some apocryphal books shed new light on obscure passages in the four gospels. The Gnosis was 'un-covered' and unveiled anew.

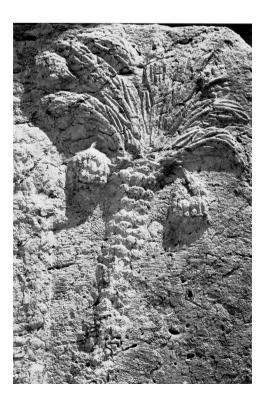
It is generally known that most messengers of the Gnosis did not write anything down themselves. Others passed their words on and often texts have been compiled from these traditions.

THE HUMAN BEING IS CALLED WITH EVERY HEARTBEAT

At times the way is outlined so crystalclear that we may wonder why comparatively few people see and find the Gnostic path of liberation. Is there so little understanding? Are people that lazy? Do they not feel a need for it? Have their daily worries and pleasures priority? Have they no idea of the situation they are in? Many of them — consciously or unconsciously — are touched in the heart by the Gnosis time and again, like a heartbeat. They can close themselves off, but they can also open their hearts. Then they will become increasingly conscious of the true purpose of their lives. And they will perceive something of the dawn breaking in the east and of the exodus out of present-day darkness. The time has come and they feel the pressure driving them towards and into that new development.

It requires a living soul to understand the Gnosis. Philosophical reflections about the Gnosis of bygone days and its traces in history are of minor importance in this respect. What counts is acting, that is, reacting positively to the call of the Gnosis. That will increase knowledge, because Gnosis is living knowledge nourished by the original fire. Whoever becomes conscious of that process, will start living on the basis of this reality. He will also take care that concepts like Gno-

Rock-relief of a palm tree. Palmyra, Syria. Photo Pentagram



sis and Gnostic do not deteriorate towards the everyday level of incomprehension. He regards them too highly for this. After all, when there is no pure understanding, superficiality can become a great danger and everything becomes talked to pieces and fragmented only too easily, resulting in even more incomprehension and confusion.

Jan van Rijckenborgh calls Gnostic philosophising an illusion. To him Gnosis is not a philosophy, not a religion, not a method. Neither does it appeal to our intellectual or emotional faculty. Initially, it only approaches the seeking human being in a certain garment. In reality it is the power of the True Kingdom, wanting to be linked with the microcosm in a simple way. In The Gnostic Mysteries of Pistis Sophia he writes: 'And when you [...] keep your eye fixed towards the dawn and confirm it with all your actions in life, it will begin to become light in the east. The vibration of the microcosm will increase and the eastern as well as the western magnetic streams will have to attune to it. The outgoing one sweeps the unholy forces outside

The earth, like all other bodies in the solar system, is nourished, maintained and cleansed by solar energy. That stream of energy, the so-called solar wind, is emanated by the sun about once every eleven years with flames reaching a length of as much as one million kilometres. In October and November 2003, this 'blood circulation' of the sun displayed a kind of 'disturbance of the heart rhythm'. Although it was not yet time for a new heartbeat, on 28 October an eruption took place on a scale of 7, followed on 29 October by an eruption of 10 and on 4 November by a solar storm of 28. Thus, in a period of ten days a total of three very powerful eruptions, more powerful than usual, occurred. The last solar storm could be seen on film like the mighty flame of a flame-thrower. The registration equipment of the satellites could not cope with this violence and temporarily ceased to operate.

and the incoming one evokes the ancient past of God's children.'

In his book *The Angel of the Western* Window, the author Gustav Meyrink describes how the expelled forces still try to work on the human being as magnetic influences and for a long time continue to come knocking on the door of the I to be allowed back in again. Hence, neutrality of the I is the only basis and the only starting point. The Gnosis itself is doing the work in the inner chamber, when the human being gives outer form to the work in Its force. In our time all people are called to this noble work. The work on the outside of things is consciously cooperating in the harvest and preparing all those, who have not yet found the way. The work in the inner chamber is receiving the descending Gnosis in the prepared, yearning heart.

Uninterruptedly the sun moves from east to west in everybody's daily and spiritual life. That is why it is said: 'Work as long as it is day and bide your time.' In that way the human being can testify of the inviolability of God's glory.

Deceived by the straightjacket of the mind

'The highest knowledge is to know nothing.' All over the world there are people who have come to this conclusion. Others regard this ancient Rosicrucian statement as an incomprehensible paradox. What then is truth?

Classifying things into categories and imposing limitations by means of the mind can be helpful to organise our daily life. Yet, as soon as such methods are going to dominate our thinking, they obstruct our further development and deceive us inwardly. The Russian philosopher Leo Shestov (1866-1938) was one of those formidable thinkers, who was first of all occupied with the development of a 'philosophy of religion', because the intellect imposed too many restrictions on him. He was good friends with the Russian philosopher Berdjajev and visited his weekly salons in Paris regularly. Lev Shestov, his civilian name was Leo Isaak Schwarzmann, was born in Kiev. He studied in Moscow, Rome and Bern and escaped from the Bolshevists to Geneva, from where he was invited to the Sorbonne. He spent the last years of his life in Paris. In 1938 he died, leaving behind an imposing body of philosophical works.

During his search for truth, Shestov gained numerous important insights and always formulated them in a new way. Frequently he described how the human being – forced by his mentality – deviated

from the way lying before him. He asked himself over and again in the course of his examinations, what had formed his life and why he was led from the outside to the inside, to the 'mysterious immeasurable depth'. In particular he concentrated his research on the motivation of the intellectual human being. For all his life he was fighting the dominance of the biological brain. This is one of the reasons why he is regarded as one of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century. Shestov spoke about the 'unrestricted nature of the objective mind', which puts itself on a pedestal and thus threatens to dam any higher human faculty. This tendency to suppress pure inner life and to put the one-sided mind on the foreground was, however, not new.

'PHILOSOPHER OF THE ABYSS'

In order to distinguish himself from the numerous movements of his time occupied with this, he called himself the 'philosopher of the abyss'. He confronted the unlimited expansion power of the intellect with his 'apotheosis of the unfathomable depth'. Thus he wanted to show the existence of mysterious and secret depths which are inaccessible to the intellect. But this very 'abyss' gives an opportunity for the manifestation of spiritual aspects. In this context he spoke from experience, for whatever he experienced himself as mysterious and unfathomable, ultimately

offered him the key to a more profound understanding of existence. He felt and assumed an immense creative 'freedom beyond the limits of the mind'. That is why he used all his energy and attention to detach from the 'bogged-down intellectual starting points'.

Shestov recognised very keenly that making excessive use of our reason also entails a threat to religious life. In his publication *Schlüsselgewalt* (Power of the Keys) he indicated how boldly and high-handedly the experimenting mind behaves, as it even wants to prove God. What hasn't reason been up to in the course of history! The errant reason constructed its own criteria to prove the existence of the Divine. As if God would bow down to such criteria! God was graciously proven by the conceited mind.

${ m A}$ way out where there is no longer a way out

Where did the way lead that Shestov took? He stated: 'The one and only way out begins where, according to human standards, there is no longer a way out. You must turn to the unfathomable in order to be able to approach the impossible. [...] There is God, just because the unfathomable does not fit into any category of the mind.' In another publication he stated: 'You must submerge in God and by a leap liberate yourself from everything rational.' In that way he placed himself in the company of the early Christian writer Tertullian who noted: 'Credo quia absurdum! I believe, just because it breaks up the limits of the mind.' In his book Athens and Jerusalem (1938), Shestov described his philosophy of life: 'Jerusalem must go to Athens to receive the blessing.' And in The Balance of Job. About the wellspring of eternal Truth (1929), he used the same

image: 'Everything that comes from Jerusalem must be weighed in the balance of Athens, it is said.' What was meant by that? Shestov called Athens the capital of pure reason and Jerusalem the capital of religious feeling. He saw no compromise between the intellectuality of Athens and the expectant desire of Jerusalem. Both excluded each other. 'Knowledge can never be the highest goal of the human being!' That is why Shestov particularly condemned 'the drive for knowledge in philosophy', because, according to him, due to all that 'knowledge', 'the true gift of God' would be darkened. By this 'true gift' he meant the absolute, creative freedom which is brought about by the selfperceiving faith. In that way the human being could shake off the straightjacket of the mind. 'God is only present where no laws are dominating, but where freedom can live and breathe.' He was convinced that the first warning against the working of the mind had already been described in the myth of the fall. According to Shestov, there was only an intellectual fall, which had to end with the expulsion of the human beings from the 'mysterious unfathomable'. That 'fall' originated from the 'craving for knowledge and eating from the poisoned fruits.'

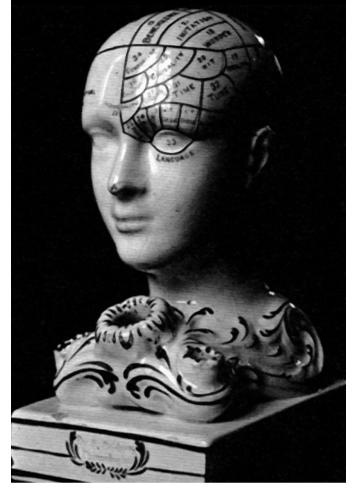
'CLOSING OFF THE PATH TO THE TRUTH'

Shestov characterised modern science as a cancer tumour. 'Science is spreading by the hour and thus is making the mists around the original mystery grow ever denser.' As a true inhabitant of the border he experienced the unnatural dividing wall between himself and the unfathomable very intensely. Referring to this imprisonment he said: 'It is as if a power has decided to close off the way to truth already before the creation of the world.'

Ever since the errant mind has been going dark ways. 'Either the whole construction of our world is wrong or all of us are going the wrong way to truth!'

Shestov did not condemn thinking in general, but he turned against the addiction to thinking that causes all kinds of deviations, because the sharpened mind does not even understand itself. In vain he has sought for harmony between heart and head. He regarded the consciousness as veiled. 'People are living surrounded by an infinite number of secrets. [...] It is a mystery to what extent they have been cut off from their primordial origin and from the wellspring of life.' Shestov was convinced that immense forces are slumbering in human souls, and that these forces could make them experience the 'unfathomable depth' directly. In his publication The Idea of Good (1898), he pointed out how this can take place: 'Fraternal love is not yet God. You must rather seek after that which is higher than ordinary sympathy and compassion, higher than good. You must seek God!' His search begins where 'the road leads beyond reason and morals.' Since the publication of that work, Shestov has been regarded as one of the most important representatives of 'Russian religious renaissance'.

Which were the summits of his spiritual quest? Shestov experienced that the contrast between faith and science cannot be bridged. He was also able to experience how he received inner revelations through his faith. To him, inner revelation was absolutely different from knowledge. Shestov related that 'revelation can only take place on the mountain'. He saw Moses on Mount Sinai and Jesus on the Mount of Olives and confronted his fellow human beings with these images in order to make them reflect profoundly on them. In his opinion all the strained intellectual



efforts of people took place in the lowest regions of life. That is why he called the materialised manifestations of truth merely 'embodiments of errors'. He experienced his philosophy as 'the highest music in the sense of Plato'.

'The human being must stand on his inner scales'

The philosopher Shestov did not live in seclusion. He exchanged ideas with well-known thinkers like Martin Buber, Albert Einstein, Marinan Zvetajeva, Martin Heidegger and Edmund Husserl. Boris Pasternak was influenced by his views. His old friend Sergey Bulgakov, a Russian philosopher of religion, describes him as follows: 'It was impossible not to like Shestov, even if you did not share his views. This is explained by his amazing tactfulness, his impressive goodness and benevolence. These attributes formed the general tone of his relationships with people —

Earthenware head showing the place of the brain functions.

without any jealousy whatsoever. All of this went together with his hard struggle for spiritual achievements.'

According to him, what mattered was that the human being is going to stand on his inner scales. The potential of the soul must be manifested. That is why he chose the figure of Job from the Old Testament as an example. Job remained faithful to his inner consciousness. He trusted God uninterruptedly, although his suffering and distress increased daily. After it had finally become 'heavier than the sand of the sea', he shouted in his despair and helplessness: 'Let me be weighed in a just balance, and let God know my integrity.' Shestov was deeply impressed by Job's suffering, but above all by his steadfastness. Without grumbling he accepted and endured his fate, while he might as well have used his mind and fight God. Shestov was fascinated by this acceptance of fate. He regarded it as a distinctive mark of the genuine good that is present in a human being. Whenever that speaks, the tempters surround him, first of all his wife and his best friends who advised him 'for good reasons', in their opinion, to reject his God. Where then is divine justice, if someone is suffering like that? Yet, Job disregards such 'reasonable' advice, he is deaf to it.

'Apotheosis of the unfathomable'

With the theme of his *Balance of Job*, Shestov wanted to show that in a more profound sense the intellect is not important, 'because God looks on the heart.' God hears the desperate cries from the depth, but He rejects the rational proposals of Job's friends. Only in this way the law of laws can be unveiled and recognised. That is the 'apotheosis of the unfathomable', a higher reality, remaining concealed to the mind as we know it. Thus God is a power surpassing human reason. The

mind as far as it has developed in us, is a temporary one. Whoever holds on to it, clings to darkness.

Shestov showed that everyone 'should detach from this intellectual tutelage' in order to be able to experience true life. Only after having left affairs of the world as defined by reason behind, he will find the way back to the spiritual fatherland. Like Job he will no longer nourish worldly expectations, but live consciously as a stranger in his everyday world. He experiences this 'being a stranger' as mercy, because he has been allowed to detach from the straightjacket of the mind. In her translation of The Voice of the Silence, H P Blavatsky called the mind the 'great slayer' that has to be eliminated and, Shestov wrote, be replaced by a new thinking. The philosophy of the Golden Rosycross describes in detail how that new thinking, which cannot be limited by any human restriction, can develop.

Sources:

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Idem, *Potestas Clavium – die Schlüsselgewalt* (Power of the Keys), Verlag Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg, 1956.

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Sergey Bulgakov, quoted after Gustav A. Conradi from: Leo Schestow oder das paradiesische Leben in der Schrift 'Die Idee des Guten' (Leo Shestov or Paradisiacal life in the work 'The Idea of Good'), see 3.

Old Testament: 1 Sam.16:7; Job 6:3, 31:6.